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Report from the Session on Post-Secondary Education

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REPORT FROM THE SESSION ON POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Leader: Rod Ferrell, Coordinator of Rehabilitation, Gallaudet College

Panel Members: Dr. Larry Arthur, NTID; Dr. Ron Jacobs, CSUN; Mr. Fred Morrison, CSUN; Mr. Roger Reddan, TVI; Mr. Roy Pierce, Delgado; Mr. Pete Wrescher, Delgado

Rod Ferrell opened the session with some remarks about post-secondary education. The text of those remarks follows:

"Deaf students in the U.S. have a unique opportunity which exists nowhere else in the world. They have the opportunity to attend well-structured, appropriate post-secondary educational programs. Those of us here today represent that post-secondary education area. Together, we share a unique responsibility. What is that responsibility?

"Basically, it is to satisfy our consumers — deaf students, their parents and families, and the rehabilitation field, which supports so many of our students.

"I'm happy that we get along with each other, because we need each other. You buy our services on behalf of your clients because you and they want to obtain the opportunity for your clients to reach their highest potential. What we in post-secondary education must remember is that we have a responsibility to provide the best educational service, which includes pre-enrollment information. The students we accept have the right to know exactly what we can offer them in the way of academic education, vocational training, life skills education, and placement. Are we in the field of post-secondary education being as candid as we should be when we are talking with prospective students? Are we really giving you who purchase our services a good service for your dollar? Are we guilty of recruiting for our own institutions or are we interested in seeing

the deaf student go to the most appropriate program? Are we even familiar enough with the various programs to properly advise the prospective student?

"What about after acceptance and enrollment? Does our relationship with VR end when the student enrolls or are we continually trying to keep you informed on the progress of your clients and the changes that are occurring within our institutions?

"What about you in the VR field: Are you honest with your clients? Do you really give them the proper advice and assistance, or do you know enough about the different programs to advise prospective students on the different options available to them?

"I think we all have some self-evaluating to do. We also need to listen to each other. We don't do enough constructive criticism and peer review. Are we really getting better? I think so, and that's largely because of our cooperative efforts. We all make mistakes, but we have to remember that many deaf students have to make the most of that first chance and that for many, a second chance may not be offered."

Following the opening statement, Rod introduced the panelists. Each panelist spoke briefly about their institutions, with particular emphasis on their relationship with Vocational Rehabilitation.

Questions and answers followed the presentations. Various issues were raised, including transfer from one program to another, use of

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interpreters, quality of support services, paper work issues, federal financial aid programs, cooperative work-study programs, and exchange of information between the various programs.

It appears that a good relationship exists

between VR and post-secondary programs, if our program was any indication of the trend. Of the approximately 75 people who attended, about half represented post-secondary programs, half were rehabilitation personnel.